

FISH GIVEN A HELPING HAND

The Sandy Bay Rivulet is one of the largest catchment areas within the Hobart municipal area, and has a broad array of cultural, recreational and ecological values recognised by the community.

Despite extensive urbanisation, the Rivulet still supports populations of native fish species, platypus and remnant native vegetation.

The smaller native fish within the Rivulet are Galaxias of which there are three types—Jollytails (Common Galaxias), Spotted Mountain Galaxias, and the Climbing Galaxias.

Previously, water flowing down the Rivulet through the Digney Street culvert, scoured the Rivulet bed creating a significant jump from the Rivulet bed into the culvert.

This jump created a barrier to the movement of fish, especially small fish such as Galaxias, who only have the ability to jump approximately 4cm.

To improve the ability of fish populations to migrate up the Rivulet during low rivulet flows, Council officers in close liaison with the Friends of Sandy Bay Rivulet and freshwater ecologist Professor Peter Davies of the University of Tasmania, have installed a fish ladder in the Rivulet near Parliament Street Park.



The new concrete fish ladder designed for Sandy Bay Rivulet

The unique ladder design utilises concrete pits, usually reserved for use in a reticulated stormwater system. The pits proved to be the ideal size and shape and were easy to install.

Fish have been using the ladder which has recently been planted out to provide refuge for the fish as they migrate up the Rivulet.

This site will act as a trial with Council officers and the Friends of Sandy Bay Rivulet monitoring its performance and its ongoing maintenance requirements. Any lessons learnt will be considered, prior to any additional fish ladder installations in other Hobart waterways. ■